

We know his daughter, Tina, who joined the Navy and was the fourth generation to complete boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois, is already building on her family's record of service. It's because of families like Gordon's that America is strong.

Tennessee and America are proud of Gordon and we're thankful for his service. God Bless.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1981 COMMISSION ON WARTIME RELOCATION AND INTERNMENT OF CIVILIANS HEARINGS—INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMISSION ON WARTIME RELOCATION AND INTERNMENT OF LATIN AMERICANS OF JAPANESE DESCENT ACT OF 2006

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act of 2006. This bill would create a commission to review and determine facts and circumstances surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans, and subsequently recommend appropriate remedies.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the 1981 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearings. This commission concluded that the internment was the result of racism and wartime hysteria. Five years after publishing its findings, then President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that provided an official apology and financial redress to most of the Japanese Americans who were subjected to wrongdoing and confined in U.S. internment camps during World War II. Those loyal Americans were vindicated by the fact that not even a single documented case of sabotage or espionage was committed by a Japanese American during that time. This act was the culmination of a half century of struggle to bring justice to those to whom it was denied. I am proud that our nation did the right thing. But 18 years after the passage of the Civil Liberties Act, there still remains unfinished work to completely rectify and close this regrettable chapter in our nation's history.

Between December 1941 and February 1948, approximately 2,300 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry became the victims of mass abduction and forcible deportation from 13 Latin American countries to the United States. The U.S. government orchestrated and financed the deportation of Japanese Latin Americans to be used as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan. Over 800 individuals were included in two prisoner of war exchanges between the U.S. and Japan. The remaining Japanese Latin Americans were imprisoned in internment camps without the benefit of due process rights until after the end of the war. Japanese Latin Americans not only were subjected to gross violations of civil rights in the U.S. by being forced into internment camps much like their Japanese American counterparts, but addition-

ally, they were victims of human rights abuses merely because of their ethnic origin.

Further study of the events surrounding the deportation and incarceration of Japanese Latin Americans is both merited and necessary. While most Americans are aware of the internment of Japanese Americans, few know about our government's activities in other countries resulting from prejudice held against people of Japanese ancestry. Government files thoroughly recorded U.S. involvement in the expulsion and internment of an estimated 2,300 people of Japanese descent who lived in various Latin American countries. Uprooted from their homes and forcibly transported to the United States, these civilians were robbed of their freedom as they were kidnapped from nations not directly involved in World War II. The Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians acknowledged the federal actions in detaining and internment of civilians of enemy or foreign nationality, particularly of Japanese ancestry, but the commission had not researched the historical documents that exist in distant archives.

That is why I am introducing the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act of 2006. We must review directives of the United States military forces and the State Department requiring the relocation, detention in internment camps, and in some cases, deportation of Japanese Latin Americans to Axis countries and recommend appropriate remedies, based upon preliminary findings by the original commission and new discoveries. It is the right thing to do to affirm our commitment to democracy and the rule of law.

I am proud that there are many Members of Congress and community activists who have come together in this continuous fight for justice. I especially thank Representatives DAN LUNGREN and MIKE HONDA for their commitment to this issue and joining me in this effort. The Campaign for Justice and Japanese American Citizens League have been the vanguard organizations driving this effort to ensure that injustice be rectified. Two weeks ago, I had the privilege of joining with citizens in Los Angeles at the Japanese American National Museum to commemorate the Day of Remembrance. First observed in 1978 in Seattle, the Day of Remembrance has become a significant tradition in the Japanese American community, rooted in recognition, education, and activism for redress and social justice. The Day of Remembrance is observed with educational events around the country on or around February 19 because on that day in 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, a directive that allowed for the mass internment of persons of Japanese ancestry. As we remember and reflect on the tragedy that innocent people experienced during World War II, it is my hope that our government can do the same and right this egregious wrong. A necessary first step to achieving this altruistic goal is swift passage of the legislation being introduced today.

Mr. Speaker, let us renew our resolve to build a better future for our community by dedicating ourselves to remembering how we compromised liberty in the past. Doing so will help us guard it more closely in the future. As we remember the 25th anniversary of the first commission hearings and commemorate the Day of Remembrance, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Commis-

sion on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act of 2006.

TRIBUTE TO THE COLTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to pay tribute to the Colton Chamber of Commerce on the occasion of its Centennial Anniversary.

This institution, located in the "Hub" of the Inland Empire, has been an economic engine and key player in the region's historical development since 1906, when one of its founding members, the California Portland Cement Company, laid the foundation for the first Colton Chamber of Commerce office building.

Throughout the past century, the Colton Chamber of Commerce has been a driving force, transforming a newly-created city into a vibrant center of employment, thriving neighborhoods, and diverse economy. The Chamber's innovative programs and services have successfully created a lifeline of economic activity which fuels the heart of the Inland Empire to this day.

The Colton Chamber of Commerce has more than 200 members who are committed to strengthening the City's prosperity while improving the quality of life of more than 48,000 residents. The Chamber's services have helped attract over 2,000 large and small businesses from a variety of industries to the region. These efforts have provided jobs for the area's diverse workforce, created economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income families, and expanded goods and services to people from all backgrounds and walks of life.

I have had the privilege of working with members of the Colton Chamber of Commerce and local leaders to enhance economic development in the region. For example, at the request of the Chamber and city leaders, I helped reopen the comment period on land restrictions posed by endangered species designations on the Delhi Sands Flower-Loving Fly. Providing the City of Colton with an opportunity to present information to support its case was an important first step to moving forward vital projects that will improve local schools, help grow small businesses, revitalize neighborhoods, create jobs, and preserve our environment.

Over the past 100 years, the Colton Chamber of Commerce's efforts have ultimately helped increase opportunity in the lives of the children, seniors, and low-income and middle-class families who call the Inland Empire "home". The Chamber's efforts will have a long-lasting impact in the region and will help chart the course of economic prosperity for Southern California over the next 100 years.